



*With Compliment of
F. L. Davidson*

*Sir Sandford Fleming
Ottawa*

THE EMPIRE AND SEA-POWER

A TREATISE

BY

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DEDICATED

TO

L.T. COL. GEORGE T. DENISON

OF TORONTO

President of the British Empire League in Canada

As a small token of appreciation of his great and successful efforts
during many years in the cause of Imperialism

The writer gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the columns of "The British Empire Review" for much of the subject matter of this pamphlet, and claims but little originality for the ideas therein set forth.

F. L. D.

Halifax, N. S., Dec. 15, 1911.

THE EMPIRE

AND

SEA-POWER

What is the modern meaning of the words Empire and Imperialism? What does the Empire stand for? It stands first for the security which the people of the British Isles give to the people of the self-governing Dominions, to enable them to develop their own nationalities along their own lines, without interference from outside. The word also stand for great ideals. It stands for the ideals of Justice, Freedom, Duty and Righteousness, and the strength of the Empire consists with all of us in the self-governing Dominions, in a community of these ideals.

The British Empire represents both a fact and an idea.

As a fact, it is so significant, that the highest flights of the orator and poet are inadequate to express its majesty and grandeur. Never before has the world seen an Empire so vast and so great. In lands of which the proudest generals of Imperial Rome never dreamt, the British flag is flying.

But the Empire represents much more than vastness. It is more. It has in part at least realized the ideals of one of the earliest and greatest of Empire builders,—the great statesman Chatham.

The Empire he sought to build was to be great before it was big, and was to carry abroad the principles of Freedom and of Liberty.

In the realization of this idea lies our proudest boast. The Empire has taken up the White Man's Burden, as Kipling has defined it:

In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
And check the show of pride
By open speech and simple
An hundred times made plain
To seek another's profit
And work another's gain.

In this ethical aim lies the source of the stability and greatness and the guarantee of the permanency of our beloved Empire.

Imperialism is of the spirit which seeks to remind us that we are all parts of one whole. Anti-Imperialism, the spirit that would willingly forget it. The Imperial movement is continually from separation to centralization.

ORIGIN OF THE EMPIRE.

The chief constituents of the modern idea of Empire are (a) Unity, (b) love of a common liberty, and (c) sense of a common destiny.

Thus we need no dictionary definition to tell us the meaning of Empire, and Imperialism.

Nearly all Canadians are Imperialists in the best sense of the word, and though the "Little Englander" still flourishes to a certain extent in England; the "Little Canadian" is hard to find.

To the Imperialist of Canada, Imperialism means the aspiration that, for the high purposes of its world mission, the British Empire may be enabled to hold together for all coming time.

Firmly believing that the strength of our United Empire affords one of the best guarantees of Order and Freedom, Justice, Peace and Progress, the Imperialist is determined in

favor of some effort, and some form of political evolution which will hold together the component parts of the Empire, and secure an Imperial Unity that shall endure.

Great Empires have arisen, and in their turn have disappeared, but they have in every instance failed in that which now devolves upon our Empire to do—to spread the blessings of a higher civilization to the various nations and dependencies under the British rule.

This is the sort of Imperialism which accepts the great heritage of Empire, with all its responsibilities—soberly and responsibly—as a trust—imposing obligations which an honorable man is bound to discharge.

This is the spirit in which we know the King has entered on the duties of his great estate—as his father did before him—and the responsibility of Empire rests on his shoulders with incomparably greater weight than on those of anyone else.

As Mr. Balfour eloquently said in one of his speeches,—“He holds together in the bonds of common loyalty, millions of subjects who have never seen him, who live at the uttermost parts of the earth, and who look to him as the head and centre of the great Empire of which they are citizens.”

This vast political organization is a great instrument for good—for promoting civilization, and for the welfare of mankind.

In this scheme of Imperialism, we can each play our small part. True Imperialism should draw men together. It has done so, and it will, if we hold fast to it—draw them closer.

But what of the origin of our Empire. The modern ideals of Empire were not consciously in the minds of the first Empire builders.

In the days of “Good Queen Bess” and before, in the hearts of our ancestors was the wild lust for adventure and the mad glory of daring.

In the veins of the brave “sea-dogs of Devon” beat the fierce blood of the Norse Vikings, which was stirring their descendants to do and dare for the glory of England.

The broad seas was the battlefield on which was decided not any question of Imperialistic ideals, but the more national

one of the maritime supremacy of England. The struggle broadened into a fight for colonies and for commerce.

Englishmen began to realize that their destiny impelled them quite as strongly to people the silent and unoccupied regions as to give their dead to the restless seas. Lands in which to trade and in which to settle their sturdy sons, they must have, and during the latter half of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth centuries, the world was in travail to produce this mighty Empire.

Then came the last era, that of peaceful development and expansion. England became a "Mother of Nations," and in lands of which Drake and Chatham never dreamed, colonies came into existence.

The hitherto unpeopled parts of the world were filled up, and settlers with British hearts and British doggedness tamed the wilderness, subdued the vastness of the prairies, and overcame the arid plains.

THE BIRTH OF THE IDEA OF EMPIRE.

Silently, however, the idea of Empire was springing into flower, from the dust of strife and conflict.

To Cromwell we owe its first manifestation. He it was who made England not one of the strongest, but one of the greatest of the powers. He gave us an English Navy with its influence and prestige.

In consequence of the use he made of it, the name of Englishman became as proud a boast as the "Civis Romanus sum," that awed the aliens of the Roman world. He who did any wrong to an Englishman, no matter where or when, committed an act of violence and insult against England, for which he must fear the vengeance of the Puritan Admiral. Our Navy had reached its majority and had become what it is to-day, "An armed chivalry of the sea."

In the commercial wars with Spain, we find that Cromwell followed his naval attacks with a demand for freedom of trade, and for fair and just laws to all Englishmen. His England was to be a protector and guarantor of trade, and a defender of the rights of personal freedom and of religious liberty.

SPIRIT OF UNITY.

The first constituent in the idea of Empire, is that of Unity.

At the time of the death of our beloved King Edward, "the Peacemaker," a common sorrow and a common mourning demonstrated to the world how complete is that unity. On the veldts of South Africa, on the prairies of Canada, on the "sunlit plains extended" of Australia, in torrid India, in every outpost of civilization where the Union Jack floats, wherever Englishmen are to be found, the Imperial spirit was at this juncture dominated by the spirit of unity.

The silken ties of blood and kinship are stronger than those of conquest and domination forged by the Imperial cohorts of Imperial Rome. To the Briton, wheresoever he is and wheresoever born, England is not merely the Mistress of the world, throned on Imperial splendor—she is the "Motherland".

When she mourns for her mighty King, he mourns for his King. When she stands alone amid angry and jealous foes, he flies to her aid. To her he turns with a patriotism born of a common origin, a common history. He repeats with no less force and meaning than the Londoner, the words of Wordsworth:

In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old:
We must be free, or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold,
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

This sense of unity and of kinship manifests itself most characteristically in the British Colonist.

The Briton leaves the homeland to build a new and a greater Britain beyond seas. He never loses his love of country: his heart oft yearns for the hedges and lanes of England, the dales of Bonnie Scotland, and the glories of the Emerald Isle. His children and grandchildren call his country "Home"; but in their strength of character, and in their desire for a fuller development, they transplant to their broader lands the habits,

institutions, and customs, which are rooted deep in the past of English history.

Thus there is created a common loyalty to all that is best in the national past, with a strengthening of the Imperial tie.

In a speech delivered in 1900, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain asked: "What should we be without our Empire? Two small island with an overcrowded population in the Northern Sea." That is one side of the bond; both sides are expressed more aptly in Kipling's lines:

So long as the Blood endures
I shall know that your good is mine: ye shall feel that my
strength is yours.

The Empire owes its birth and growth to Sea-power, and only by Sea-power can it be maintained.

A Community of Interests, one of the greatest reasons to be urged for Imperial unity, can only be preserved and strengthened so long as we command the sea.

The Imperial Arch, bridging the seven seas rests on the foundations of the Imperial idea of unity, liberty and the sense of a common destiny. If one of these foundations is weakened, the strength and permanency of the Imperial Arch is imperilled.

Imperial Defence, by which we gain the maxim of protection and power at the least possible cost, is imperatively called for by our common interests. And the first line of this Defence is an Imperial Navy, *under one central lead and organization*. This is essential to the command of the sea, and is of paramount importance, and a vital necessity, to the Empire.

That the very existence of our Empire depends upon our mastery of the sea, is now universally known. This is recognized by our enemies as well as by our friends. If we are strong enough to hold the sea communication of the Empire, then every part of it is safe, and the commerce which is its life blood, will be free from attack.

If we slacken in our effort, if our knees weaken, and we refuse to shoulder the burden of an adequate Fleet, then the day of reckoning is at hand, and the sun of the Empire which rose with so glorious a promise, will set forever. It is here where the vigorous and growing peoples of the Empire can

help. Even with all the wealth and vast resources which Great Britain commands, the burden of the Fleet and Army, maintained for the benefit and protection of all parts of the Empire, is a crushing one.

The supreme importance to the Empire of Britain holding the command of the sea, must be clearly evident to all.

The millenium has not yet come, and the day of the international burglar is not yet passed. The British Navy is the big policeman of the world, and it will be an evil day for our national households within the Empire should the time ever arrive when that Navy loses its world supremacy.

The two-power standard for the Navy must be maintained by the British Empire *as a whole*—no longer *done* by the overburdened shoulders of the Mother Country.

Germany has clearly announced her intention of being the second naval power, and it is her ultimate object to be first. In 1900, on the first of January, the Emperor said: "As my grandfather re-organized the Army, so I shall reorganize my Navy that it may stand on the *same level* as my Army." And the preamble of the great Navy Bill of 1900 stated that the German Empire did not need a Navy, "as strong as that of the greatest Sea-power," but a fleet that would be powerful enough, as that Empire "will not be in a position to concentrate all its forces against us," to enable them to so frustrate that Empire as to "jeopardise its own supremacy."

Now the traditional policy of the British Navy is to concentrate; but it must be apparent that this cannot be done without some modification. Certainly it cannot do so to the same extent as the German Navy, which can, and does, without inconvenience, concentrate practically the whole of its Naval force in the North Sea. The British Navy, however, has to protect the trade and a coast line of forty-three thousand miles in extent. The German Navy, therefore, only calculates on *having to meet about sixty per cent.* of the forces of the British Navy, and for that it is preparing itself.

Upon the passing of the German Navy Act was formed the German Navy League. It was thus that the "Quarterly Review" spoke of it:

"The German 'Flottenverein' or Navy League, boasts a million paying members and is the largest and most spirited patriotic organization of its kind that has ever existed in any

country. It draws its adherents from all parts of the Empire. It is strong in the South German cities, like Munich, and in the Northern sea-ports. It is filled with pan-Germanic feeling and is of course saturated with anti-British sentiment. The open aim of this organization is the *eventual achievement of Naval supremacy*. The achievement of that aim would of course mean the destruction of the British Empire."

While in "Our German Cousins," a "Daily Mail" publication, it says: "It was a close imitation of the British Navy League, but with this difference, that it enjoyed from the first the patronage of all the German Royalties. Prince Henry of Prussia became its patron, and the leaders of the German Nobility enrolled themselves in its ranks. It grew in strength with marvelous rapidity, till to-day it numbers over a million members, till the circulation of its journal, "Die Flotte," reaches nearly half a million, till its publications and maps are seen throughout Germany, in barber shops, in hotels, in railway stations. It maintains armies of lecturers; it gives cinematograph shows everywhere. It has a revenue exceeding fifty thousand pounds. For more than ten years it has carried out an educational campaign throughout Germany in favor of *an all-powerful Fleet*, until to-day its work is practically done."

In view of the aspirations of other nations for Naval supremacy, the British Empire is to-day confronted by a danger unparalleled in its history.

It is daily becoming more manifest that all parts of the Empire must, for the benefit of all, unite in *one* Naval Policy, and that the British Navy must be the Empire's Navy, supported by the self-governing Dominions as well as by the United Kingdom.

In the recognition by the great daughter nations of the paramount importance of the Empire being supreme at sea, in their generous acceptance of a share in the burden which such mastery entails, it is that those who preach the doctrine of sea-power have their strongest asset.

It is by such splendid gifts of battleships as New Zealand and Australia have made to the Imperial Fleet, that the peoples of the Empire are to be convinced that, no matter the cost, to hold the Empire, we **MUST** hold the sea.

It cannot be said that any contribution made, or at present proposed by Canada to the sea-power of the Empire, is, or is calculated to be, of any real service or benefit to the scheme of Imperial Defence.

The scheme as proposed by the late Government was to build a small local fleet for local purposes only, whose *raison d'être* would be to guard the trade routes of the North Atlantic when the Empire is at war. Even this small fleet as planned would, I understand, take fifteen years to build and get in good working order, and would by that time be composed of ships that would in all probability be obsolete.

The truth is, that of contributions of light cruisers which could be used to most advantage in the North Atlantic for the protection of the Trade Routes, the British Navy stands least in need.

The Imperial Navy does need, however, from the Dominions contributions of *battleships* and *Dreadnoughts*, which would be of *real use and benefit and a valuable addition* to the Empire's Fleet.

Was the position formerly assumed a generous or dignified one for the Premier Dominion of the Empire to take in regard to Imperial Defence? It certainly was not an adequate one. Would we have been satisfied?

Would our people be full of enthusiasm, and eager to dip down into their pockets, and ready to send their sons to serve in our navy, as they read with glowing eyes and flushed cheeks what the battleships of the Motherland and the fighting ships of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are doing in the firing line, while our brave lads and stout ships perform the profitable task of seeing that our chilled meats and selected eggs get safely to market?

I think not. Our people will demand their right and privilege to assume their proper share of the "White Man's Burden," the Burden of the Empire.

The Burden of Empire might be translated in this country, into the protection of Canada on sea and land. We can no more afford to permit British Sea-power to fail than can the people of Devon and Midlothian. A real injury to British prestige would matter very seriously to us, and the collapse of British Sea-power would put a final period to the History of Canada.

Without the support and prestige of the British Navy, on what would we depend? Not the Monroe doctrine, and the American Navy. The Monroe doctrine itself depends for its existence as a force in world politics, on the supremacy of the British Navy. On what terms could we look for support

and protection to the American republic? Would not history repeat itself, as it has done so many times in the past, and the peoples coming into our country as friends to furnish aid against outside aggression, would remain as conquerors, or at least declare a protectorate over the country to which they extended their aid in time of need. Such an alternative to the support of the British Navy would not be thought of for one moment by any Canadian.

The power which holds the sea, commands the land, and what the arteries of a man are to his life, the arteries of the sea are to the British Empire.

Born out of the spirit of self-reliance, no doubt, the national characteristic, a feeling at one time seemed to be prevalent within the Dominion in favor of a Navy for local defence only.

However advisable such a policy may be as regards military defence, it is an absolutely suicidal policy for Canada to assume in regard to Naval defence.

Politically, the establishment of local Navies for each of the Dominions, while being of no addition whatever to the sea-power of the Empire, will cause, rightly or wrongly, an impression in the minds of the foreign powers, that the Empire is in rapid progress of disintegration. They will argue that separate armaments must before long entail a separate and distinct diplomacy and diplomatic corps, which eventually must mean independence and the end of the Empire, as an Empire. And their conclusions would be justified.

A separate Canadian Navy, we may presume, would eventually be placed under Imperial control, in time of war at least, but it would appear at a great disadvantage, for it would necessarily differ somewhat in organization and training, not having been constantly employed as part of the same fleet.

An Admiral, to take successful command of a Naval force, should have manoeuvred the whole of it in peace frequently before being called upon to take it into action.

It is more than likely, however, that in the event of hostilities a Canadian Navy would remain in local waters for the supposed protection of local interests, and might therefore at some critical juncture neglect to concentrate with the Imperial Fleet.

Different organization, division of command and responsibility, therefore, will probably end in demoralization.

A Fleet, to be effective and powerful, must therefore have been united and under one command *in peace as well as in war*. To be otherwise is to court disaster.

Alexander Hamilton, the great soldier and statesman of the American Revolution, finally managed to overcome the narrow views of many of the individual States as to State control of Naval defence. Thus he speaks:

"We have heard much of the fleets of Britain, and if we are wise, the time may come when the fleets of America may engage attention. But if one National Government had not so regulated the navigation of Britain as to make it a nursery for seamen, if one National Government had not called forth all the national means and materials for forming fleets, their prowess and their thunder would never have been celebrated.

"Let England have its navigation and fleet; let Scotland have its navigation and fleet; let Wales have its navigation and fleet; let Ireland have its navigation and fleet; let these four of the constituent parts of the British Empire be under four independent governments, and it is easy to perceive how soon they would dwindle into comparative insignificance."

The sea is *all one*, and the British Navy therefore must be *all one*; and its solitary task in war must be to seek out the ships of the enemy wherever they are to be found, and destroy them.

At whatever spot, in whatever sea, these ships are found and destroyed, there the whole Empire will be simultaneously defended in its territory, its trade, and its interests.

A policy, unfortunately pursued, of separate and local Navies for local purposes and defence, is a heresy from a Naval point of view, and absolutely unsound on political, financial, and strategical grounds; and the only possible result of such a policy would be that an enemy who has discarded this heresy, and combined his fleets, would attack in detail and destroy those separated British Squadrons, which, united, could have defied defeat.

What then must be realized is, that *the Naval problem is not one of defence*, but rather "to find out where the ships of the enemy are, and to destroy those ships."

The British Navy has existed as a power in the world for several centuries, through long years of experience and trial, it has succeeded in storing up a vast amount of knowledge

and skill, and to-day is the acknowledged head of all things Naval. The Dominions within the Empire, and sharing the Imperial Navy, would have the great benefit of all this vast amount of stored-up knowledge and skill of a century or more of Naval growth.

There are now thirteen millions of Britons outside of the Mother Country anxious to assist in the Empire's work, and it is to be hoped that they will, before long, participate in an Imperial Navy, and not fritter away their resources upon costly local Naval forces, of doubtful value, thus reducing the strength of the Empire to a mere rope of sand.

As the Sea is to the Empire the breath of life, to use the apt metaphor of Lord Selborne, one of the greatest of Naval authorities, so the Imperial spirit must be part of our Imperial being.

If Canada ever stood at the parting of the ways, she does so no longer. She now stands in the Imperial way, with outstretched arms and eager face set towards the goal of her high destiny, as the greatest of the sister nations, with the Motherland, within the Empire.

Let us then rise to the level of our Imperial citizenship, and be up and doing, and by so doing, show to a watching world that we will act on the Empire's motto:

"Each for all, and all for each."

F. L. DAVIDSON,

Secretary, Halifax Branch, British Empire League in Canada

As this pamphlet goes to press, the report comes over the wires that Germany is proposing an enlarged Naval programme entailing an additional expenditure of ninety millions of dollars; and that the Naval Policy of Canada will be determined at the next session of Parliament. The coincidence is significant.

Let us hope that our legislators will all fully realize their great responsibilities in regard to this proposed legislation of such vast importance to Canada and the Empire.

F. L. D.

